

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 AMMAN 04511 01 OF 02 190556Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----031061 190601Z /11

R 180908Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6152
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 AMMAN 4511

EXDIS TREAT AS NODIS

O.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PDEV, PINT, LE, JO
SUBJECT: PARTITION OF LEBANON--JORDANIAN ATTITUDES

REF BEIRUT 2707

SUMMARY: WHILE THERE HAS NOT BEEN NOTABLE SYMPATHY IN JORDAN FOR LEBANON'S TRAGEDY, WE BELIEVE LEADERSHIP WOULD BEH GREATLY CONCERNED BY PARTITION OF LEBANON FOR THREE MAJOR REASONS: IT COULD SET OFF CHRISTIAN VS. MUSLIM SECTARIANISM THAT COULD BE VERY DEVISIVE IN ARAB WORLD AND MIGHT BE A PARTICULARLY DIFFICULT PROBLEM FOR JORDAN GIVEN SIGNIFICANT CHRISTIAN MINORITY; IT WOULD BE FURTHER FISSIONING OF ARAB NATION TO DIRECT BENEFIT OF ISRAEL; AND IT WOULD BE SOURCE OF INSTABILITY AND CONTINUING UNREST IN AREA. MOST IMPORTANTLY, ONE OF MINI-STATES WOULD, UNLESS SYRIA STRONGLY OPPOSED IT, BE DOMINATED BY RADICAL PALESTINIANS WITH CONTINUING IRREDENTISM TOWARD ISRAEO. WE THINK KING HUSSEIN, WHO HAS IMPORTANT
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 AMMAN 04511 01 OF 02 190556Z

CHAMOUNIST CONNECTIONS, WOULD USE WHAT INFLUENCE HE HAS TO DISCOURAGE PARTITION, BUT THAT IF FISSIONING PROCESS STARTED, NOTHING JORDAN COULD DO ALONE WOULD AFFECT PROCESS. WE BELIEVE PEACE PROCESS WOULD BE SEVERELY SET BACK BY INSTABILITY RESULTING FROM PARTITION. END SUMMARY

1. IN MEETING FEW WEEKS AGO WITH U.S. NATIONAL WAR
COLLEGE GROUP, KING HUSSEIN IN DISCUSSING ISRAELI

INVASION OF SOUTHERN LEBANON RECALLED THAT HE HAD
ATTEMPTED AT AN ARAB SUMMIT SOME YEARS AGO TO OBTAIN
GENERAL CONCURRENCE TO KEEP LEBANON OUT OF ARAB-ISRAELI
CONFLICT AND HE EXPRESSED SYMPATHY WITH LEBANON AND
REGRET OVER COURSE OF EVENTS. WE BELIEVE MANY IN
JORDANIAN LEADERSHIP WHO APPRECIATE WIDER SIGNIFICANCE
OF LEBANESE SITUATION SHARE KING'S SENTIMENTS; MAJORITY
OF JORDANIANS, HOWEVER, ARE APATHETIC TOWARD LEBANON
TRAGEDY EXCEPT INsofar AS ISRAEL IS PERCEIVED TO PROFIT
FROM CHAOS IN COUNTRY. MANY PALESTINIANS IN FACT TAKE
ATTITUDE THAT LEBANESE FOR YEARS STOOD ASIDE PROFITING
FROM ARAB-ISRAELI CONFLICT AND THEY WARRANT LITTLE
SYMPATHY FOR TROUBLES THEY ARE NOW SUFFERING.

2. WE ALSO BELIEVE THAT MOST JORDANIANS HAVE NOT
CONSIDERED FUTURE COURSE OF EVENTS IN LEBANON AND HAVE
NOT CONCERNED THEMSELVES WITH IMPLICATIONS OF POSSIBLE
PARTITION. HOWEVER, INDICATIONS ARE THAT KING AND
THOUGHTFUL JORDANIANS WOULD BE VERY DISTURBED AT PROSPECT
OF PARTITION. AT TIME OF ISRAELI INVASION OF LEBANON
THERE WAS CONCERN THAT ISRAELIS, IF THEY DID FINALLY
WITHDRAW FROM LEBANON, WOULD ATTEMPT TO LEAVE BEHIND
SATELLITE CHRISTIAN MINI-STATE. ONE SOURCE TOLD EMBASSY
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 AMMAN 04511 01 OF 02 190556Z

THAT IF SUCH A STATE WERE SET UP, PARTICULARLY UNDER
ISRAELI AEGIS,
CHRISTIAN-ISRAELI LINKAGE WOULD TRIGGER
LATENT MOSLEM ANIMOSITIES TOWARD CHRISTIANS AND BEGIN
PROCESS OF POLARIZATION ON CONFESSIONAL LINES THAT WOULD
BE VERY DANGEROUS FOR STABILITY THROUGHOUT ARAB WORLD.
CHRISTIANS ARE OFFICIALLY ESTIMATED TO COMPRISE ABOUT
12 PERCENT OF JORDAN'S POPULATION. POTENTIAL HAZARDS
OF ANY SUCH CONFESSIONAL HOSTILITY IN JORDAN COULD THERE-
FORE BE SIGNIFICANT. KING HUSSEIN HAS PRIDED HIMSELF ON
CONFESSIONAL TOLERATION AND GOOD RELATIONS EXISTING AMONG
FAITHS IN JORDAN; WE BELIEVE GOJ WOULD THEREFORE BE CON-
CERNED THAT THESE RELATIONS COULD BE SEVERELY STRAINED BY
LIKELY VIOLENT BIRTH OF MINI-STATES ON CONFESSIONAL BASIS
IN LEBANON, ALTHOUGH FACT THAT MAJORITY OF LEBANESE
CHRISTIANS OF DIFFERENT DENOMINATIONS THAN THOSE IN JORDAN
COULD BE MITIGATING FACTOR. CLOSELY RELATED GOJ CONCERN
WOULD BE THAT SUCH A SPLIT OVER LONGER TERM WOULD MEAN
RELIGION MIGHT BECOME ONE MORE IMPORTANT FACTOR CONTRIBUTING
TO ARAB DISUNITY AND THUS ARAB INABILITY TO MEET ISRAELI
CHALLENGE.

3. EQUALLY WORRYING FROM JORDANIAN POINT OF VIEW WOULD BE FACT THAT FORMAL PARTITION WOULD BE FURTHER SPLITTING OF ARAB WORLD INTO IMPOTENT CONTENTIOUS UNITS TO DIRECT BENEFIT OF ISRAELIS. JORDAN IS UNDER NO ILLUSION THAT A LEBANON STATUS QUO ANTE OR ANY OTHER UNITED LEBANON IS LIKELY ANY TIME SOON TO BE A SIGNIFICANT FACTOR IN ARAB-ISRAELI EQUATION, BUT JORDAN, IN ITS PECULIAR POLITICAL AND GEOPGRAPHIC VULNERABILITY, TO SAY NOTHING OF ITS DE FACTO PARTITION BY ISRAEL, FEELS A STRONG PRACTICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL NEED FOR ARAB UNITY AND THE INTEGRITY OF RECOGNIZED FRONTIERS. IT WOULD REGARD ESTABLISHMENT OF A CHRISTIAN STATE IN LEBANON AS ANOTHER FORM OF ISRAELI EXPANSIONISM, A COLONIALIST OUTPOST TO BE EXPLOITED BY ISRAEL TO THE DETRIMENT OF THE CONFRONTATION STATES.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 AMMAN 04511 01 OF 02 190556Z

4. SOME WOULD ALLEGE, HOWEVER FARFETCHED THIS IDEA MAY APPEAR, THAT THE ADVENT OF LEBANESE MINI-STATES WOULD BE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR ISRAEL TO CLAIM THAT THE STATE DOMINATED BY PALESTINIANS IS AN APPROPRIATE HOMELAND FOR DISPLACED PALESTINIANS, AND HENCE THAT THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION HAD BEEN RESOLVED. THE JORDANIANS WOULD EXPECT SUCH AN ARGUMENT TO BE USED TO SUPPORT CONTINUED ISRAELI OCCUPATION OF THE WEST BANK, LEAVING A TRUNCATED JORDAN WITH A MILLION FRUSTRATED PALESTINIANS. ACCORDING TO SOME DIRE SCENARIOS, IN SUCH A SITUATION THE JORDANIANS WOULD ALSO EXPECT ACCELERATED ISRAELI MOVES TO SETTLE AND INCORPORATE THE WEST BANK, ACCOMPANIED BY EXPROPRIATIONS OF ARAB PROPERTY AND OTHER MEASURES TO ENCOURAGE AN OUTFLOW OF ARABS, MOST OF WHOM WOULD COME TO JORDAN. THE GOJ WOULD FEAR THAT THIS WOULD AGGRAVATE TENSIONS WITHIN JORDAN, AND INCREASE IRREDENTISM OF PALESTINIANS IN JORDAN AS WELL AS THEIR RADICALISM. THIS WOULD AS A CONSEQUENCE INCREASE THE INFLUENCE OF THE PLO, WHICH WOULD PRESENT A CLEAR DANGER TO THE SURVIVAL OF THE REGIME. THE EMERGENCE OF MINI-STATES, PARTICULARLY IF WE HAD NOT MADE EFFORTS TO STAVE IT OFF, WOULD ALSO WIDELY BE SEEN AS PART OF A U.S./ISRAELI SCHEME TO DISPOSE OF THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION AND MAKE IT EASIER TO MANIPULATE THE AREA AND FOR ISRAEL TO DOMINATE IT.

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 AMMAN 04511 02 OF 02 190627Z
ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W
-----032002 190638Z /13

R 180908Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6153
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L FINAL SECTION OF 02 AMMAN 4511

EXDIS TREAT AS NODIS

5. THE MOST DISTURBING ASPECT OF PARTITION FOR THE GOJ, HOWEVER, IS LIKELY TO BE THAT THE RESULTING MINI-STATES WOULD NOT BE, AT LEAST IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE, ECONOMICALLY OR POLITICALLY VIABLE; THEY WOULD BE EVEN MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO OUTSIDE MANIPULATION THAN LEBANO IS TODAY, AND WOULD BE A CONTINUING SOURCE OF UNREST IN THE AREA. THE MOST IMPORTANT SOURCE OF THIS UNREST WOULD BE THE MINI-STATE DOMINATED BY THE PALESTINIANS. FOR THE JORDANIANS, AND INDEED FOR THE ARAB MODERATES IN GENERAL, THE ADVENT OF A STATE DOMINATED BY RADICAL PALESTINIANS WOULD BE A DRAMATIC CHANGE, REVERSING TO A GREAT EXTENT THE SITUATION OF THE PAST 30 YEARS. (WE ALSO RECOGNIZE THAT THIS SCENARIO IS DEPENDENT ON QUESTIONABLE ASSUMPTION THAT SYRIANS WOULD ALLOW SUCH A SITUATION TO COME INTO BEING.) WE DOUBT, AND WE BELIEVE THE GOJ WOULD AGREE, THAT THE FORMATION OF THIS STATE WOULD SOLVE THE PALESTINIAN QUESTION, IN ANY CASE, IT WOULD DO NOTHING TO SOLVE THE JORDANIANS' PALESTINIAN PROBLEM. THE GOJ WOULD FEAR THAT A PALESTINIAN-DOMINATED MINI-STATE WHICH CAME INTO BEING THROUGH VIOLENCE

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 AMMAN 04511 02 OF 02 190627Z

(RATHER THAN BY A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT IN WHICH CASE IT WOULD PRESUMABLY BE DEMILITARIZED AND HEDGED ABOUT WITH INTERNATIONAL COMOMITMENTS) WOULD BE MORE RADICAL THAN THE PLO NOW IS, WOULD HAVE GREATER FREEDOM OF MANEUVER, AND WOULD HAVE AN IMPROVED BASE FOR IRREDENTISM. THE GOJ WOULD SEE BLEAK IMPLICATIONS TO THIS EVENTUALITY--INCREASED MEDDLING IN JORDAN, STRON PRESSURES TO UTILIZE JORDAN AS A BASE FOR

ATTACKS ON ISRAEL, AND GREATER DANGERS FOR SURVIVAL OF THE EAST BANK-DOMINATED REGIME. ONE BY-PRODUCT OF SUCH FEARS IS LIKELY TO BE A PERCEIVED NEED FOR GREATER U.S. ASSISTANCE TO MEET THE DANGERS.

6. KING HUSSEIN IN PAST HAS HAD CLOSE CONNECTIONS WITH CHAMOUNISTS. WE THINK IT LIKELY THAT HE WOULD USE WHAT INFLUENCE HE HAS TO COUNSEL STRONGOY AGAINST PARTITION. HE WOULD ALSO BE LIKELY TO ENCOURAGE ANY REASONABLE MEASURES THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN BY SYRIA AND OTHER ARABS TO AVOID PARTITION, EVEN IF THIS MEAN SUPPORTING ACTION AGAINST CHRISTIANS. HOWEVER, JUDGING FROM EMBASSY BEIRUT REPORTING, DYNAMICS OF SITUATION CERTAINLY BEYOND JORDAN'S ABILITY TO INFLUENCE ALONE, AND WOULD EVEN TAX ANY JOINT EFFORTS ARABS CAN NOW MOUNT.

7. LIKE EMBASSY BEIRUT, WE CAN NOT SEE ANY WAY IN WHICH PARTITION COULD HAVE POSITIVE EFFECT ON PEACE PROCESS. WE CONCUR IN VIEWS PARA 5 AND 6 REFTEL, AND WOULD ADD THAT INSTABILITY LIKELY TO BE PERMANENT AS PARTITION LINES MAY NEVER BE CONSIDERED FINAL. MOREOVER, EMERGENCE OF PLO-DOMINATED STATE MAY PERMANENTLY CHANGE CONTEXT IN WHICH OUR PEACE EFFORTS HAVE BEEN UNDERTAKEN. ADDITIONAL INSTABILITY ON ISRAEL'S NORTHERN BORDERS WOULD ALSO GIVE IT OPPORTUNITY TO DERFER SERIOUS CHOICES NECESSARY FOR PEACE, INCLUDING FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, EXCUSE ON SECURITY GROUNDS TO HOLD ON TO CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 AMMAN 04511 02 OF 02 190627Z

WEST BANK AND CREATE ADDITIONAL SUPPORTING "FACTS" THERE.

8. IN REGARD PARA 6 REFTEL, WE WOULD OBSERVE THAT A CERATIN AMOUNT OF AREA STABILITY IS VITAL TO CLIMATE FOR MEANINGFUL NEGOTIATIONS. THEY COULD PROBABLY BE CARRIED ON WITH LEBANESE INSTABILITY AT CURRENT LEVELS, AND PERHAPS EVEN COULD WITHSTAND SOME DETERIORATION OF SITUATION AS LONG AS SYRIANS WILLING TO MAINTAIN THER PEACEKEEPING ROLE OR LEBANESE FACTIONS REFRAIN FROM LAST STEP OF PARTITION; WE DOUBT THEY COULD BE MAINTAINED IN FACE OF LARGE SCALE VIOLENCE AND INTERVENTION EMBASSY BEIRUT FORESEES IF THERE IS MOVE TO PARTITION. AS FAR AS JORDAN CONCERNED, WE BELIEVE ADVERSE EFFECTS OF PARTITION, AS OUTLINED ABOVE, WOULD WEAKEN JORDANIAN STABILITY AND MAKE IT MORE DIFFICULT AND MORE COSTLY FOR US TO BRING JORDAN INTO NEGOTIATIONS.

9. WE ASSUME DEPARTMENT IS REVIEWING PARTITION QUESTION RAISED BY EMBASSY BEIRUT. WHILE THERE IS OBVIOUSLY LITOLE JORDAN COULD DO IN ISOLATION, WE BELIEVE THEY WOULD BE RECEPTIVE TO JOINING WIDER ARAB AND U.S. EFFORTS WHICO PROMISEDLTO EFFECTIVELY PREVENT A PARTITION.
SUDDARTH

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PARTITION, POLITICAL SITUATION, RELIGIOUS GROUPS, FORM OF GOVERNMENT, GOVERNMENT REACTIONS, CAT-B, POLITICAL SUMMARIES, SELF DETERMINATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978AMMAN04511
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: P850101-1463, N780005-0166
Format: TEL
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780547/aaaabnfo.tel
Line Count: 278
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 11da309b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS, EXDIS
Reference: 78 BEIRUT 2707
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2656933
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PARTITION OF LEBANON--JORDANIAN ATTITUDES
TAGS: SHUM, PBOR, PDEV, PINT, LE, JO, (HUSSEIN I)
To: STATE SS MULTIPLE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/11da309b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014